

THERAPY

Speech Pathology Services
Allied Health Consulting Rooms

Suite 4
43 Tallebudgera Creek Rd
West Burleigh Q 4219
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July, 2011

On-Site Speech Pathology Services for Schools (Gold Coast – Tweed Valley)

Information Sheet Principals and Learning Support Teachers

Therapy Matters has been providing private speech pathology services to children of the Southern Gold Coast and Northern NSW for over 15 years. In fact, our first clinic was established at the Kingscliff Medical Centre in 1995. Since those humble beginnings, we now have a purpose built clinic at West Burleigh and we provide on-site speech pathology services to a number of schools on the Gold Coast and Northern NSW.

We have a number of associate speech pathologists and a Senior Speech Pathologist/Centre Director. Our clinic is committed to the provision of high quality, evidenced based therapy services where parents and teachers understand the importance of oral language skills for learning.

Our clinic has been involved in extensive project work screening, identifying and supporting students with oral language impairments within Catholic School Education (Lismore Diocese) over the past 5 years. Our work with Catholic School Education has highlighted the high numbers of students entering school without the necessary oral language foundation skills for learning and we applaud all schools' efforts to identify these children and to meet their needs with high quality, evidence based oral language intervention in collaboration with speech pathologists.

While there are a range of resources available to schools to implement activities, strategies and programs to meet the communication and learning needs of speech and language impaired students, it can often be difficult to gain access to timely, intensive and on-going speech pathology intervention for students. As a result, in 2010 our Therapy Matters speech pathology team developed a model of service for schools to enable the provision of Private Speech Pathology Services on-site. We invite you to read about how our on-site services work and encourage you to contact Tania Teitzel at our West Burleigh office if you would like to discuss these services further.

Kind Regards

Tania Teitzel

Senior Speech Pathologist

Centre Director

Senior Speech Pathologist/Centre Director: Tania Teitzel

Associate Speech Pathologists: Tania Blunden, Amanda Clancy, Emma Dougherty,
Jenna Feros, Jacqui Sullivan and Sarah Tyack,

Key Components of Therapy Matters On-Site Services

Teacher and Parent Workshops

The foundations for effective collaborative working relationships between teachers/parents and speech pathologists can be developed through half and full day oral language workshops on topics such as: oral language foundations for school success, common oral language impairments of school aged students and supporting oral language difficulties in the classroom.

- **Workshops (Low Preparation required (i.e. previously presented workshop) - \$130/hour + GST**
- **Workshops (High Preparation required (i.e. novel workshop) - \$195/hour + GST**

Kindergarten Screening Process

If speech and language difficulties are identified early upon school entry then difficulties can be remediated and supported as early as possible and the concomitant impact on a child's academic learning and social skills can be minimised. Therapy Matters offer two types of screening programs: Speech Pathologist Administration of Screening Assessment and Teacher Administration of Screener (Speech Pathologist score and interpret)

- **Speech Pathology Screening Assessment of Kindergarten Students – 30 – 45 min screening assessment with brief 1 page report \$95/student +GST**

OR

**Teacher Assessment of Communication -Pre primary (TAC-P)
A Screening Tool for Teachers of Five-Year-Olds
(Bell, K., Rigg, D. Hunt, J. & Clements, M. (2007) Next Challenge)**

The Teacher Assessment of Communication Tool screens the language and speech skills of pre-primary children needed for successful academic outcomes. A Speech Pathologist must perform the scoring and analysis of the test for accuracy of screening. The TAC-P was designed to be a collaborative and preventative program to support Teachers and Speech Pathologists working together efficiently and effectively.

- **Speech Pathology collaboration costs in TAC-P Screening**
 - **Teacher training in administering the TAC-P - \$130/hour +GST**
 - **Scoring and Interpretation of TAC-P with provision of Excel Spreadsheet for class with cohort test data organised in addition to clear recommendations for those requiring referral to Speech Pathologist and those in need of classroom based oral language intervention - \$8/Student (if feedback sessions organised) \$16/Student (if no feedback sessions organised) +GST**
 - **Teacher Feedback Session - \$130/hour +GST**
 - **Parent Feedback Session (includes provision of handouts and home programs for children with identified difficulties) - \$130/hour +GST**

Diagnostic Assessments

High quality, evidenced based speech therapy relies upon a full diagnostic assessment of a child's communication profile. Therapy Matters offers the following assessment services in schools:

- **Follow on Standard Diagnostic Assessment for children involved in Kindergarten Screening (described above) - \$125**
- **Standard Oral Language Diagnostic Assessment (Kindergarten) - \$250**

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- **Standard Oral Language Diagnostic Assessment (Grades 1-6) - \$350**
- **Standard Literacy Diagnostic Assessment (Grades K-6) - \$350**
- **Standard Oral Language + Literacy Assessment - \$500**

Regular Therapy Sessions

Schools can choose either a weekly or fortnightly visiting schedule throughout each term. Our past experience in school based services has shown consistently that a weekly service is generally most effective to meet most students' needs. As a result, if schools are to choose a fortnightly visiting schedule then we strongly recommend that either a teacher aide or parent attends each session to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to correctly implement the speech therapy programme of activities in between sessions.

- **Weekly**
- **Fortnightly**

Flexibility in Therapy Session types

While most students will receive an individual 45 minute therapy session from the speech pathologist, we have been exploring other options for treatment to meet certain student's and school's needs. These varied treatment options will only be approved by the Senior Speech Pathologist/Centre Director if there is sound evidence that such a treatment approach would meet a students' communication needs. These treatment options will generally not be offered if the prime reason or motivation for the option is a financial one.

- **Individual 45min therapy session - \$95/session**
- **Individual 30min therapy session - \$65/session**
Eligibility Criteria
 - Weekly students only
 - Students with minor communication difficulties
 - Minimal explanatory notes required for home program
- **Small Group 60min therapy session - \$65/session per student**
Eligibility Criteria
 - Between 2-4 students in a group
 - All students with current diagnostic assessment
 - All students should have similar communication goals and abilities as well as complimentary temperaments

Complimentary consultations with teachers & teacher aides

Our speech pathologists are always willing to liaise with educators. We recognise that educators have different needs in how they would like to liaise with their student's speech pathologist. We are able to arrange regular informal meetings, email communication, teacher feedback forms, modelling of strategies and scaffolds. We are also able to attend parent meetings and IEP discussions. These lengthier, formal meetings usually attract a charge for families however, they can occur in lieu of the child's therapy session.

- **Informal meetings**
- **Email communication**
- **Teacher feedback forms**
- **Modelling**
- **Sharing of resources/scaffolds**

Regular communication with parents

While the provision of an on-site school therapy service is often convenient for parents, it can be challenging to establish effective collaborative working relationship with parents who are unable to have face-to-face meetings with the therapist. We always encourage and welcome parents into our sessions. It is particularly essential for those students on a fortnightly schedule to have their parents attend at least for a few sessions. Over the

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years we have put a range of strategies in place to support parents to understand their child's communication difficulties and needs as well as develop an effective collaborative working relationship with their child's speech pathologist.

- **Speech Therapy Homework book sent home after each session which includes a record of activities completed, any home practice activities and explanatory notes**
- **Printed schedule of therapy appointments for the term**
- **One page progress report at the end of each term**
- **Email or phone consultation with parents at least once a term or more frequently if requested**
- **Clinic handbook for all new clients**
- **SMS texting to parents before sessions for payment reminders as requested**

Variety of payment options

Families are able to pay for sessions under one of two methods: pay as you go (PAYG) or pay in advance (PIA). Schools are also able to pay for the services mentioned above.

Pay As You Go

- Parent attends each session at school
- Parent pays the therapist directly on the day by cash or cheque
- Therapist will give the receipt to the parent or the receipt will be sent out on the day
- The child will only be seen if payment is received on the day
- Parents unable to attend can make arrangements with our office manager for individual payments to be made at our West Burleigh Office (Electronic Health Claiming and EFTPOS available) or by direct bank transfer. These payments must be made before the therapy session commences.
- Additional travel charges are incurred for families when the therapist has to attend a school for only part of the day. If the therapist has students scheduled for the entire day at a school then no family will be charged a travel fee.

Pay in Advance

- Parents pay on invoice before the term commences (before due date on invoice) by cash, cheque or direct bank transfer.
- Parents are given a 5% discount if payment made prior to due date and payment is made in full (only available for students booked for weekly therapy)
- Therapy sessions are allocated in priority of payments received
- Failure to make payments by the deadline will mean that the child will not be seen for therapy and they will go on a waitlist until a vacancy is available and payment is made
- Receipts will be issued for all sessions at the end of term unless otherwise specified
- Receipt will outline all sessions attended and any credits due if for example the child was sick or the therapist was sick.
- Additional travel charges are incurred for families when the therapist has to attend a school for only part of the day. If the therapist has students scheduled for the entire day at a school then no family will be charged a travel fee.

School

- Schools are welcome to show their commitment to the oral language skills of their student by paying for workshops, teacher training, teacher consultations, diagnostic assessments and therapy. When speech pathology services are paid for by schools all services listed above would have GST added to the scheduled fees.



Rebates and payment assistance

Families can be assisted with the cost of private speech therapy through the following avenues however rebates rarely covers the full cost of a speech pathology session:

Private Health Fund Rebates

- Families can be paid a rebate from their health fund if they have Extras cover for speech pathology services

Medicare Rebates – Chronic Disease Management Scheme

- Students with chronic conditions and needing team care may be deemed eligible for this program by their local Doctor
- A rebate for only 5 sessions per calendar year is available

Medicare Rebates – Follow up Speech Pathology Services for People of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Descent

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students may be deemed eligible for this program by their local Doctor
- A rebate for a further 5 sessions per calendar year is available

Medicare Rebates – Children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder or other Disability

- Students with Autistic Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, another pervasive developmental disorder (e.g. PDD-NOS), cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, fragile X syndrome, hearing or visual impairment may be deemed eligible for this program by their local treating paediatrician
- A rebate for up to 4 assessment sessions and 20 treatment sessions is available

Federal Government Funding (FaHCSIA)- Children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder and Better Start for Children with Disabilities Initiatives

- Students under 7 years of age with an Autistic disorder, Asperger's Disorder, another pervasive developmental disorder (e.g. PDD-NOS), cerebral palsy, fragile X syndrome, Down syndrome, hearing or visual impairment who have a Letter of Introduction from the Autism Advisor/Carers Australia are eligible for up to \$12000 of therapy services (to a maximum of \$6000 per year).

Speech Pathologists with extensive experience and the latest resources

Our school-based Speech Pathologists are specialists in the field of school aged speech, language and literacy difficulties. They have extensive experience in working together with educators and regularly attend training to widen their professional knowledge and skills in the field. Our speech pathologists are often called upon to present at schools and conferences to share their knowledge with parents, educators and other speech pathologists. At our West Burleigh base we have access to hundreds of resources, assessment tools and reference books, to support children with communication difficulties. We are retailers of high quality speech pathology resources such as Mindwing Narrative Concepts and Lindamood Bell Resources. Our speech pathologists have published assessment tools and presented at national conferences.

I thank you for your time in perusing the documents about our on-site services. Please do not hesitate to contact our clinic to clarify any of the information in this document. We wish your school success in identifying and supporting student's with oral language needs in the classroom and we hope that you are able to utilise the services of a speech pathologist in the future. Our profession as a whole is fervently committed to helping children **learn to talk** so that they can **talk to learn!**