



Coastwide Therapy Services

Berkeley Vale - 1/152 Lakedge Ave, Berkeley Vale

Toukley - 1/44 Victoria Ave, Toukley

Woy Woy - 12, 26-30 Railway Street Level 1,
Clock Tower Building, Woy Woy

CALL 43 881110 For more information

OT FOR CHILDREN

Occupational Therapy is a health profession that offers support and advice for children who are having difficulties in their everyday activities or occupations. These include those things that they need to do, want to do or are expected to do on a daily basis.

Occupational therapists who work with children look at the child's ability to learn and perform in the areas of self-care, play and at school. Children that see Occupational Therapists may have any condition, disability or impairment that affects their ability to perform everyday activities.

These include but are not limited to:

- Attention Disorders (ADHD and ADD)
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Cerebral Palsy
- Global Developmental Delay
- Sensory Processing Difficulties
- Concentration and Attention Difficulties
- Learning Difficulties
- Neurological impairments
- Physical impairments

Coastwide Therapy Services uses person centred approaches and considers your child's strengths and interests and then combines fun, developmentally appropriate, skill based and sensory-based activities that ensure those goals that are most important to the child and those closest to them are achieved. A play-based approach to therapy, is used as a medium through which the therapist can promote the development of cognitive, social, communication, motor and sensory skills.

Coastwide Therapy services can help children in the following areas:

Pre-writing development - We work with the child and focus on grip development, posture, attention and concentration, engagement, pre scissor skills etc.

Handwriting - using the ETCH (Evaluation of Children's Handwriting) we identify needs and use a range of table top, vertical surface and multi-sensory activities that focus on pencil grip, letter formation, spacing, pace, legibility, attention, concentration, posture, fatigue etc. We make handwriting fun - something that for lots of children can be anything but.

Sensory Processing - Assessment occurs using the Sensory Processing Measure, parent interview and observation of the child. From there strategies to help children run at an optimal level of alertness for learning and interaction are developed and implemented across environments. Coastwide Therapy Service has 4 clinics across the Central Coast where children are able to experience a range of sensory activities including suspension equipment, therapy balls, weighted products, climbing equipment, deep pressure activities etc

Visual Processing - Using the WRAVMA to assess we focus on any areas of concern during clinic sessions. We assist children to focus visual attention on particular parts of the environment (such as the smart board or the teacher giving instructions or the engaging in play with a friend) and to block out non important visual information. We work on skills that help children determine where an object is in space and assist them to be able to determine the difference between similar objects. These skills are worked on using a range of activities to focus on visual tracking, memory, figure ground, matching, visual motor etc all of which are essential skills for academic learning such as maths and reading.

Fine Motor Skills - Functional grip development, scissor work, puzzle completion and construction are worked on at each session at the clinic through play. These skills are not only important for school based activities but can have direct impact on self care (dressing, bathing, feeding, grooming) and playing with peers. Coastwide Therapy Services has a huge range of games and table top activities that are used to develop fine motor skills so little fingers can be used more functionally.

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Gross Motor Skills - These skills involve things such as balance, endurance, posture, climbing, throwing, jumping, skipping, catching etc. These skills allow children to explore their environments and to be aware of where their body is in space. At Coastwide Therapy Services this is done using a range of fun activities like obstacle courses, balance beams, climbing structures, suspension equipment etc. Joint sessions with Physiotherapy are also available if required.

Attention and Concentration - Coastwide Therapy Services can assess for any sensory or environmental issues that may be impacting on the child's ability to attend to task. Development of strategies to assist across environments such as movement breaks, chewing whilst completing certain tasks, clear time frames, visual cues etc will be trialled at the clinic before being recommended.

Self Care Skills - OT's assist children and their families to break down everyday tasks (showering, dressing, grooming) into manageable steps and working on key components of the task to lead to achievement of the identified goal. This may include the development of visual schedules, fine motor and gross motor activities, fun games that involve motor planning and coordination - all things that are needed for self care activities.

Play & Social Skills - At Coastwide Therapy Services we use play as a medium for assessment, learning new skills, developing social skills and building confidence in a child to explore their environment.

Balance and Co-ordination - We use an engaging, sensory based treatment environment at the clinic, including suspension equipment, obstacle courses and graded activities that work on balance, bilateral coordination, motor planning and spatial awareness.

Equipment Prescription - We prescribe any adaptive equipment required to assist a child be more functional and engaged in their environment. Our therapists have extensive skills in prescribing a range of equipment including wheelchairs, bath aids, hoists, slings, hi low beds, toilet aids etc.

Home Modifications - Coastwide Therapy Services are able to assess and recommend modifications to assist in making an environment more safe and functional for children and their carers. Our team has been involved in the construction of purpose built group homes along with completing individual home modifications on a smaller scale such as rails, hob removal, bathroom modifications access ramps etc.

Complex Seating Systems - MAT evaluations can be completed, measurements taken and custom made seating can be prescribed at Coastwide Therapy Services. Our team has experience in prescribing custom made equipment for those children whose posture requires more technical/ specialised support.

Positioning - At Coastwide Therapy Services a child's positioning across environments eg home during feeding, in the car, in the classroom etc can be assessed and the appropriate postural supports prescribed or made. Coastwide Therapy services are committed to collaborating with other relevant professionals (Paediatricians, Neurologist, Surgeons, speech pathologists, psychologists, physiotherapists, dieticians and educational consultants) and making appropriate referrals to provide your child with consistent, holistic support.

ASSESSMENTS

Assessments are recommended as a starting point to services to allow the therapist to understand the child's strengths and weaknesses and to gain a better understanding as to what might be the underlying difficulties contributing to the areas of concern. Assessments will normally take 1-1 ½ hours depending on the areas of concern. For younger children, it is sometimes best to divide the assessment over two sessions.

Parents and other significant people in the child's life (teachers, respite carers etc) may be requested to fill in a questionnaire and the therapist will also ask questions throughout the assessment. As parents are the experts in their children we find it is the way to get a complete picture of the child.

If the child has had an Occupational Therapy assessment within the past 12 months, a screening assessment is usually all that is required as opposed to a full standardised assessment. Assessment sessions are often best conducted at the clinic.

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THERAPY SESSIONS

Therapy sessions are generally 30/ 45 minutes or 1 hour long and can be completed at any of the clinics, at home, preschool or school. They are individual sessions designed to meet the identified goals for each individual child.

Coastwide Therapy Services, believe that a child's work is "play" and that having fun leads to the best outcomes. Therefore, therapy sessions involve a lot of play and games specifically chosen to help develop the child's skills.

Children and their families will be asked to work on specific skills between sessions, the therapist will attempt to make incorporate these activities into the family routine rather than making them be seen as homework. For example, for a school aged child, they may be asked to concentrate on specific aspects of their handwriting, or to trial a new type of pencil grip while completing the homework they receive from school. Sensory strategies may be implemented with other siblings or part of regular routines eg deep pressure/ proprioception could be encouraged when siblings are playing (push/ pull activities, wheelbarrow walks, wrestling games) or when the child is being dried after a bath.

Home programs/ handouts may also be provided, suggesting a range of activities to assist in areas that may require additional attention in between sessions, for example, strengthening/ balance.