



Talking Matters

Newsletter August 2010

www.talkingmatters.com.au

All kinds of services for all kinds of kids

At Talking Matters we have lots of ways to help your child reach their potential.

Our **individual speech and language assessments and therapy** help families understand their child's strengths and weaknesses and provide ways of helping children build their skills. Therapy is supported by fun activities to practice skills at home, and for older kids software and online activities are available to support work done in therapy sessions. Sessions are also available at some schools. Our **speech assistant program** offers regular cost effective sessions for children who benefit from weekly one-on-one support.

We currently have a number of group sessions for children on the federally funded **Helping Children with Autism Package**. The 2 to 4 year olds in our **Sing, Play, Learn Group** are developing social, communication and movement skills in a bright, musical setting. The 5 to 6 year olds in our **Friendship Friday** groups are learning social skills



though sharing fun activities. The 4 to 6 year olds in our **Leap into Learning** groups develop social skills, school readiness and early literacy skills in a small supportive group of three children.

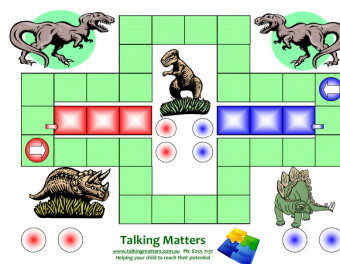
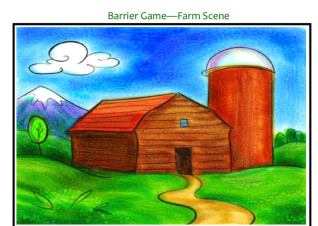
Our **Occupational Therapists** are now available Monday to Thursday and take part in some of our group sessions on Fridays.

We are currently taking registrations of interest for our **Ready to Read—Ready to Write** group sessions for term four. These sessions develop early literacy and language skills in children aged four and a half to six years. They are ideal for children who are not progressing as well as expected with literacy in reception or year one as well as for giving a head start to children with a history of speech, language or learning problems that are due to start school next year. For older children with literacy difficulties individual sessions in our **Succeeding with Reading program** continues to be popular.

Introducing Talking Matters Plus

Plus is a new part of our website exclusively for our clients and colleagues. For **clients** it provides downloadable information and fun, colourful, printable activities to use with children at home to develop their communication skills. **Education professionals** can access information and activities to use with families and children. Your child's teacher or support worker may be interested to look at the site and see activities that may be useful for their work with your child. **Health workers** can also access information to share with their clients and families.

Clients can ask their speech pathologist for their personal access code. Some of the information on TM Plus includes information about speech, language, fluency and literacy. Activities include games for developing vocabulary, concepts, following instructions and barrier games as well as board games and reward sheets to make speech practice more fun. Just go to our website www.talkingmatters.com.au and click on the plus button on the right hand side of the top menu bar. We will keep adding new things to the TM Plus site so **keep checking back to see what is new.**



Ways You can Help Your Child Reach Their Potential

Sometimes simple things are the most effective things parents can do to help children learn and develop. Here are some simple things you can do as a parent to **help your child reach their potential**.



Talk, talk, talk together. Talk as much as you can at your child's level. Talk about what you see and what you are doing. The more your child hears the more they learn. Keep talking as your children get older to strengthen relationships. Try to find a few quiet moments to talk together each day. Don't forget to listen too.

Read, read, and read some more. Reading to children is one of the most important things you can do to help your child's learning, especially with literacy skills. The more stories a child hears the better they are able to read, and reading effects all other areas of learning. Try to read together a little each day and keep it up even when your child begins to read themselves. Children can't read at the same level as their understanding until around 10 years old, so enjoy some great "big kids" stories together as they get older to develop their oral language, listening and comprehension skills.

Get down and play together. Play develops language, fine motor skills, imagination, relationships and concentration. Share a favourite toy then try something new. Use an old activity in a new way. Practice taking turns, pretending and sharing.

Share meals together. We all have days of pizza in front of the TV, but kids who regularly eat meals at the table with the family are healthier and smarter too. It's a great time to talk and share.

Be involved in your child's school life. Helping out at school is a great way to find out how your child is going and get to know your child's teacher better. If you don't have time to get into school, take some time each day to talk about school. Look at things your child has brought home, talk about what's in the newsletter, help with reading and homework. Kids think learning is important if they think it is important to you.



Get outside as a family. We all love lazy times in front of the TV but making time to regularly get outside together is fun, healthy and a good way to learn. Play a ball game, go to the playground, walk to the local shop for milk, ride bikes together, explore a park, do some gardening, take the dog out. Your kids will love it and will probably thank you by sleeping better that night and giving you some peace.

Ready to Read—Ready to Write

Coming soon in term four !

Ready to read—Ready to Write is a small group program focusing on developing the skills needed to prepare children for formal literacy training at school, including oral language and phonological awareness skills. It is suitable for children from four and a half to six years of age who are experiencing difficulties with literacy. It is ideal for children who have a history of speech and language difficulties or where there is a family history of learning difficulties or dyslexia as it gives these children an extra boost with skills that have been shown to be important in learning to read and write.



Children will learn how to:

- Hear sounds and syllables
- Sound out and blend sounds in words
- Match and make rhyming words



- Individualised assessment and therapy
- Range of programs to suit families budgets
- Specialised reading instruction
- Coordinated speech, psychology and OT services
- Educational software your child will want to use
- Fun activities to support home practice
- Continuity from toddlerhood through schooling
- Practical professional training sessions with useful resources

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