



# Talking Matters

Newsletter March 2014

[www.talkingmatters.com.au](http://www.talkingmatters.com.au)

## What's happening at Talking Matters?

It's been an exciting few months at Talking Matters. We moved into our new building in December and we have had lots of positive feedback from clients, team members and visitors. There is lots of extra space, a calmer, quieter environment for children to focus and learn and a great outdoor space developing as well.

We have been joined by lots of new team members who bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm to the team. Some of you may have also met Melanie who has recently joined the admin team.

The speech pathology team have been joined by Ashleigh Walsh, Freya Zaknich and Deb Verner. All have experience and a special interest in working with children including those with autism. They will be working in schools and the office with children with a range of needs. Deb will also be providing services in the Barossa area.



The occupational therapy team have been joined by Esther Sprod, Kate Levitt and Abbey Mengler. Esther has experience in community health and disability settings. Kate has worked in the autism field while Abbey has worked with children with a range of disabilities including spending some time working with children in Cambodia. Kate Ringvall has also joined the team and brings her many years of experience to provide support to the other therapists.

The team have been very busy with Speech/OT and social skills groups in the school holidays and an open night for professionals. We are looking forward to having displays at the Autism Expo and the Northern Children and Families Forum, to meet with families other service providers.



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## Does your child need occupational therapy?

Our occupational therapy team is up and running, providing assessment and therapy in our spacious new purpose built OT rooms as well as in a number of school settings. OT's support children with sensory issues as well as difficulties with fine motor skills. These can show as difficulties with:

- regulating attention, energy levels and emotions,
- poor fine or gross motor skills,
- poor coordination,
- delayed play skills,
- difficulties with tasks of daily living, such as sleeping and toileting.



We have added a range of new OT resources to our website and there are more to come. You can see these at [www.talkingmatters.com.au/resources/downloads](http://www.talkingmatters.com.au/resources/downloads). The OT team are also currently developing a professional development package to help teachers in schools support children with sensory and motor skill in the classroom.

Kate Ringvall has joined Talking Matters 1 day a week as Occupational Therapy Manager. Kate has many years of experience as an OT with children in both public and private settings. She will be working on a part time basis, while caring for her young son. She will be working in a management role and not working directly with clients. Kate's input into the ongoing development of high quality service provision will ensure that our OT service continues to develop and innovate services in the north that are professional, reliable and family friendly.



## Open night

Last week we held an open night for staff from local agencies and schools to show people our new offices and explain the range of services and resources we provide to families, children and schools.



It was great to meet with lots of people who share our passion for supporting children with special needs. One of the things of interest to other agencies were the various funding supports for families which make accessing private therapy affordable.

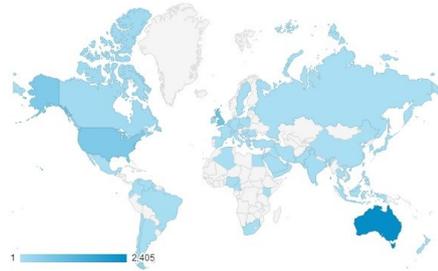
Another area of interest was the range of free information and resources available on our website. People enjoyed exploring the new facilities and looking at the types of activities children use to develop their skills during therapy sessions.

There were lots of positive comments about how friendly, supportive and enthusiastic the team were. We look forward to ongoing relationships with the people who visited.



## Looking for info, resources or activities?

Have you checked our website? Lots of people from all around the world have. This map shows the countries where people are visiting us online. There are also over 600 people from all over the world who follow our blog.



While this is fantastic we have really developed these resources for local families, teachers and other local people interested in supporting kids with special needs, so why not join a worldwide audience and check out all the great free resources available.

There are free eBooks, checklists, information sheets and activities to download. You can follow our blog and get the latest delivered in your inbox each week. You can follow us on twitter, join the conversation on Facebook, share ideas and activities with us on Pinterest. We would love to hear from you!

## Helping your children reach their potential

### Looking to learn more about literacy?

Details of these two workshops are on our website:

- Boosting speaking and listening in the early years Tuesday April 8th
- Establishing pre-literacy then early reading, writing and spelling skills Wednesday 9th April
- Presented by Diana Rigg, speech pathologist and educator.

To register call the office on 82557137 for details.

### Talking Matters offers:

- Speech pathology, occupational therapy & psychology
- Individualised assessment and therapy
- Range of programs to suit families budgets
- Saturday morning sessions for busy families
- Autism diagnosis and therapy
- Fun activities to support home practice
- School & home visits available
- Practical professional training sessions with useful resources

### Looking for information or free resources ?

Our website has information about all kinds of topics related to kids with special needs including:

- Information and activities to download
- Checklists to check your child's development
- Information about services and funding options
- Links to other useful sites
- Links to our Facebook, twitter, Pinterest pages and our blog

## Talking Matters

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