

Client Information & Welcome Kit

Support
Understand
Nurture
Hope



"Helping small people find their voice so they can engage with others in their world"

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www.smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au



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Welcome from our Practice Director



Welcome to the Small Talk Speech Therapy family. Our practice is passionate about partnering with families to deliver effective and results-based interventions for your child. Small Talk Speech Therapy is built on innovation and outside the box thinking which consistently delivers communication gains for our small talk clients. We strive to make a positive difference in the lives of each and every small talk family.

As the practice director it is one of my highest priorities to ensure consistency of service within our therapy team. Consistency in the small talk service is achieved through the development of each child's Individual Therapy Program, which outlines and tracks every goal your child is working towards. Have a look our video describing our innovative Individual Therapy Program [here](#) (or search you tube for our video "setting and tracking goals in speech therapy").

The purpose of this booklet is to provide important information about the Small Talk Speech Therapy service, policies and to serve as an ongoing reference tool for families as they progress through various stages of their therapy journey.

If you ever have anything you wish to discuss related to our services please don't hesitate to contact me directly via email (shae@smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au), phone (1300 651 704) or Facebook (Shae Rodgers Speech Pathologist).

View our **staff profiles** on our website

<http://www.smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au/about-us/our-team/>

Shae Rodgers
Managing Director

Our Mission and Values

Our Mission

Our team blends fun and structured learning methodologies with take home resources and consistent communication on your child's progress, to achieve maximum progress.

The Small Talk team are trained in behaviour management. This supports our speciality in assisting children with Autism or Developmental Delays.

Our Values

Our practice is guided by our values to:



Understanding



Support



Nurture



Hope



Client Rights and Responsibilities

Client Rights

- 🗣️ Receive services from supportive professional clinicians with skill and competence
- 🗣️ To have your culture, beliefs, values and personal characteristics understood and respected
- 🗣️ Receive open, timely and appropriate communication from our team
- 🗣️ Be included in making decisions and choices about your child's program
- 🗣️ Your privacy is maintained at all times
- 🗣️ To comment/complain, in a respectful way, to have your concerns addressed promptly.

Client Responsibilities

- 🗣️ Treat small talk staff with respect
- 🗣️ Gain consent from your therapist before video recording any part of your child's therapy session.
- 🗣️ Inform therapists of other relevant therapies and funding your child is accessing (including relevant sections of NDIS plans)
- 🗣️ Inform our team of changes to your contact details
- 🗣️ Small talk is a safe and nurturing environment – verbal abuse and violence will not be tolerated.
- 🗣️ Respect the privacy of our staff and other clients accessing small talk.
- 🗣️ Confirm your appointments with our administration team in a timely manner.
- 🗣️ Supervise your child when they are in the clinic setting or be in close proximity to the clinic e.g. waiting room, local coffee shop
- 🗣️ Abide by our clinic policies including our "Phone Usage" policy.

Our Services

Small TALK speech therapy is a family focused service specialising in children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, children with complex needs and speech and language delays.

The most common structure of the small TALK speech therapy service is as follows:



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1. Initial Consultation (45 minutes)
2. Assessment (60-90 mins)
3. Optional consultation to discuss assessment results and therapy plans (45 minutes)
4. Therapy (45 or 60 minutes)

**This procedure may be customised dependant on your requirements.*

Therapy appointments include 15 minutes of weekly individualised therapy program (WITP) preparation by your speech pathologist (customized goals and activities for your child) and 60 minutes of face to face intervention (including provision of typed WITP outlining the child's goals and relevant activities to parents and child's therapy team).

The frequency of therapy will be advised after your consultation and assessment; however therapy visits are usually weekly or fortnightly depending on your child's difficulties.

We also offer:

- [parent workshops](#),
- [group therapy programs](#) Social Skills Groups for Children with Autism, AAC Groups, Pre-Kindy Class for Children with Autism, and much more!
- [Online Shop](#) featuring visual packages to make life easier for your family.
- [Monthly Blog](#) featuring free tips and resources to build your child's communication skills

Eligibility for Early Intervention

Small TALK speech therapy services are in high demand and we have families waiting to receive intervention for their child. Small TALK speech therapy has a wide range of services and we recognise that families require professional advice and support in choosing an appropriate intervention for their child. It is for this reason that we put aside the time to offer initial consultation and assessment sessions to clients on our waiting list.



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If you are offered an initial consultation and/or assessment session for your child, this is to enable our therapists to determine your child's eligibility for intervention and make professional recommendations on the most appropriate service.

If the recommended service has no availability, then your child will be placed on a waiting list for this particular intervention.

Please note that receiving an initial consultation or assessment appointment unfortunately **does not** guarantee your child a regular individualised therapy appointment.

We create our therapy schedules on a term by term basis and clients are consulted on their appointment preferences every term.



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Our Commitment to Work Health & Safety

Small TALK speech therapy is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for our team, clients, and other persons in our workplace, so far as reasonably practicable. We aim to achieve this by management and staff working together, following a program of health and safety activities and procedures (aligned to our below WHS objectives) which are monitored and reviewed to achieve best practice and ensure compliance with current legislation.

Our WHS Objectives:

- To provide a safe and healthy work environment for our team, clients, and other persons in our workplace;
- To provide safe and healthy methods of work;
- To provide programs of health and safety activities (including training) and procedures which are continually updated and effectively carried out;
- To identify and eliminate or reduce hazards and risks to health and safety;
- To continually monitor and improve work health and safety;
- To provide education and training resources;
- To comply with all relevant WHS laws, rules, standards and codes of practice.

Infection Control

Small TALK speech therapy consider health and safety and infection control a serious matter, as such we have an infection control policy in place to protect your child from contracting diseases and infections from others in our workplace.

Our staff are regularly trained in infection control principles and our infection control procedures.

Our risk management approach to infection control includes:

- Clinicians will disinfect their hands before and after each client contact.
- Clinicians cleaning the therapy tables and wipe-able materials (e.g. toys, games, supplies, assistive devices, earphones) immediately before and after each session, using disinfectant cleaning products.
- Surfaces that are soiled with blood or body fluids with blood visible will be cleaned immediately using hospital-grade cleaning products and then thoroughly disinfected before being used again.
- Clinicians wearing gloves, wherever possible, when touching blood or body fluids (e.g. saliva). Some children are adverse to the look and feel of gloves and if the interaction will be more successful without gloves, then the clinician will use antibacterial gel before and after touching blood or bodily fluids.
- Gloves will be worn during oral motor examinations and removed correctly to avoid contacting the skin. Contaminated gloves will not contact eyes, eye glasses, or therapy table surfaces.
- All gloves and tongue depressors and any items exposed to a client's blood (i.e. if the client has a nose bleed) or body fluid will be safely disposed in a biohazard waste bin. Further, tissues, cups and utensils will be disposed of in a timely manner.
- Giving families alternative options when their child is sick so they can receive services without entering the clinic space, thereby reducing the risk of infection spread.



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Cancellation Policy

As you can appreciate, Small TALK speech therapy services are in high demand, with families often waiting to receive appointments for their child. We are committed to providing a high quality service and our therapists dedicate significant time preparing for valuable appointments. In order to assist us to 'service you better', we request that clients provide us with sufficient notice when cancelling an appointment, or arriving late. The following policies apply for appointment cancellations, late arrivals and failures to attend.

Late cancellation of an appointment

Clients unable to attend a scheduled appointment or group session must cancel the appointment by **no later than 3:00pm on the day prior** to the appointment, to avoid cancellation fees. If notice is provided after this time, a **late cancellation fee of \$100.00** will apply. If your child's appointment is scheduled on a Monday this still applies, and we ask that you please leave a message at the office, SMS or email before 3pm Sunday to avoid a fee being applied for the cancellation.

Late cancellation of two scheduled consecutive appointments, or three appointments within six months, will result in a Scheduling Hold being placed on your account, meaning you will not be able to schedule further appointments.

Failure to attend an appointment

Clients unable to attend a scheduled appointment or group session must cancel the appointment by no later than 3:00pm on the day prior to the appointment, to avoid cancellation fees. If clients fail to attend a confirmed scheduled appointment and no notice is received the full appointment fee is payable (e.g. \$179/hr). If you are NDIS funded and we have had no correspondence from you regarding the appointment within the week the 'no show' fee will be claimed from your NDIS funds. If you are self-funded your appointments will be put on hold until payment of this account is received.



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Repeat cancellations

Failure to attend, or late cancellation of, two scheduled consecutive appointments, or three appointments within six months, will result in a Scheduling Hold being placed on your account, meaning you will not be able to schedule further appointments until all accounts are settled.

Late arrival to an appointment

To ensure an efficient service schedule we ask that you arrive promptly for your scheduled appointments - we recommend arriving 5-10 minutes prior to your appointment time. Late arrivals will still incur the full fee for the scheduled appointment. Unfortunately since our therapists have other appointments scheduled before and after, the session cannot be extended if you are late.

Fees and charges for late cancellations and failures to attend

Our receptionist will contact you regarding the missed appointment to arrange prompt payment. Payment for the missed appointment must be received at or before your next scheduled session (as arranged with admin). NDIS clients may claim late cancellation fees for up to 6 hours per service booking per provider.

Please note you cannot use Medicare or Private Health Funding towards the payment of these fees.

Cancellation Alternative Service Options:

To make the most of your allocated appointment time you may also opt for one of our cancellation options which will be included in the full session fee. If one of these options is taken up, the hourly rate of \$179 will be applied to the appointment to cover the late cancellation and the additional interventions provided (via phone consultation or resource creation).

We understand that cancellations are sometimes necessary; therefore, we offer families the following options to get the most out of your allocated session time when a cancellation fee applies:



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Option 1:

Schedule a phone consultation (up to 30 minutes) with your Speech Pathologist during your child's original appointment time.

During this time, you may ask your Speech Pathologist questions about home practice, suggested activities or discuss changes seen at home during the week.

The \$100 cancellation fee will be charged plus \$79 for the phone consultation (up to 30mins), and is inclusive of the Speech Pathologist's preparation time, totalling 60 minutes = \$179.

Option 2:

Request a customised document/report, resource or additional home practice tasks.

Your speech pathologist will prepare these additional materials for you during your child's usual appointment time.

Your speech pathologist can spend up to 30 minutes on the resource which is a direct component of their therapy program such as a social story, visual schedule, extra home practice resources.

The \$100 cancellation fee will be charged plus \$79 for the customised resource, and is inclusive of the Speech Pathologist's preparation time, totalling 60 minutes = \$179.

Option 3:

Consultation via video call on your own computer or device

Your speech pathologist can call you via our video call platform ('Zoom') to conduct the session via video. This can be utilised for parents to interact with the speech pathologist or the child to interact with the speech pathologist.

The 60 minute video session will be charged at \$179 and must be within your child's allocated appointment time.



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Cancellation Scenarios

The following scenarios are examples of how the late cancellation fees and additional services can be used.

Scenario 1

Late cancellation

Sally phones at 3:30pm on Monday to cancel her daughters scheduled appointment on Tuesday at 4pm. She informs reception that her daughter, Emily, is sick and will not be able to attend her scheduled session tomorrow

Sally is informed that a late cancellation fee of \$100 applies as notice was given after 3pm.

Scenario 2

Fail to attend

John was sent an SMS reminder for his son, Danny's, appointment, he replied to confirm his attendance. Danny's appointment is on Wednesday at 1pm. Danny's Speech Pathologist is waiting to see Danny at 1pm, however he does not arrive. Reception phones John and he advises that he is sick.

John is informed that the full session fee applies given that small talk was not informed of his inability to attend the scheduled appointment.

Scenario 3

Late cancellation + Option 1

Mary phones on Thursday morning to cancel her appointment for Sam at 2pm. Mary is advised that a late cancellation fee applies and is offered options to have a phone consultation, video consultation or a resource created. Mary wishes to discuss some recent issues that have become apparent at Sam's school and decides to choose a phone consultation to talk this through with her Speech Pathologist.



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Mary is informed that the fee for this is \$179 which includes the late cancellation fee and the phone consultation (of up to 30 minutes).

Scenario 4

Late cancellation + Option 2

Barry phones on Tuesday morning to cancel his appointment for Ben at 3pm. Barry is advised that a late cancellation fee applies and is offered options to have a phone consultation, video session or a resource created. Barry wishes to have Ben's Speech Pathologist create a home practice resource (book about his new sounds) as this is something that had been discussed in a previous session.

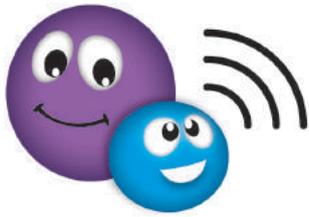
Barry is informed that the fee for this is \$179 which includes the late cancellation fee and the resource development (of up to 30 minutes).

Scenario 5

Late cancellation + Option 3

Rita sends an email cancelling Amelia's appointment for 4pm on the same day, due to transport issues. Reception attempts to contact Rita by phone but she is unable to be reached. Reception sends Rita an email advising her of the late cancellation fee and options (phone consultation, resource creation and video call). Rita replies to the email stating that she would like to attend a video session with her daughter at her scheduled appointment time.

Reception advises that the fee for this is \$179 which includes the late cancellation fee and the video call (of up to 30 minutes).



I need to cancel my session

Call, email or SMS
Small TALK
before 3pm
the day before
your session*

*Including weekends for Monday sessions

Call, email or SMS
Small TALK
after 3pm
the day before
your session*

*Including weekends for Monday sessions

No contact to
Small TALK and
do not show up
for session

No fee
Option to
reschedule

Late Cancellation
fee
\$100

No Show fee
Full session fee
payable

Options

Option 1:
Late Cancellation
Fee \$100 +
Phone Consult*

*up to 30 minutes (\$79) for a regular 60 minute session, and 15 minutes (\$44) for a regular 45 minute session. Total cost is equal to cost of regular session.

Option 2:
Late Cancellation
Fee \$100 +
Resources*

*up to 30 minutes (\$79) for a regular 60 minute session, and 15 minutes (\$44) for a regular 45 minute session. Total cost is equal to cost of regular session.

Option 3:
Video Session*
= \$179 (1 hour session)
= \$144 (45min session)

*using 'Zoom' platform (requires strong internet connection and personal iPad/computer) for regular session length.



Out of Clinic Policy

Sessions out of the clinic setting (i.e home, school, or any location other than the Small TALK clinic) will be charged at a rate of \$214.00 for a 60 minute session (1 hour of direct time, 15 minutes of indirect time) or \$179 for a 45 minute session (45 minutes of direct time, 15 minutes of indirect time) This additional cost covers:

- Travel within the local area
- Additional resources being provided to school
- Additional correspondence with therapy team including teachers and parents

Additional fees may apply for the following out of clinic sessions:

- Sessions in rural/remote areas (MMM4 and MMM5)
- Team meetings at a location other than the Small TALK Clinic
- Out of Clinic Assessments
- Appointments at locations outside of the local area

In the above circumstances, a quote will be provided by Small TALK and will be developed in line with the NDIS price guide (<https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/price-guides-and-information#price-guide-for-ndis-providers-as-of-1-february-2019>)

Small TALK clinician's try to keep out of clinic sessions as close to one another as possible to ensure minimal cost to clients, however distances may change from week to week as the offsite schedule changes.

Failure to cancel or reschedule an out-of-clinic therapy session which results in a clinician travelling without purpose will incur a no-show fee for the full amount of the scheduled session fee.



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Outreach Clients Important Information

Confirmation of Appointments

Your response to your confirmation email or text message will be used as consent for the therapy session to take place, and will be used in place of the signed service delivery record during school term.

If we are unable to reach you and confirm your session before the scheduled time, no session will be provided (even if your child is at school), as we have not received consent for the service to be provided. Providing the service without consent is against Small TALK policy and NDIS guidelines.

Payment for Sessions

Self Funded & NDIS Self Managed Clients

A copy of your invoice will be emailed on the day of your child's therapy session. You can make payments in the following ways:

-  In clinic
-  Credit card over the phone
-  Direct Deposit (details can be found on your invoice)
-  PayPal via smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au

If you do not receive your invoice on the day of the session, please contact our office. Once funds have been received by Small TALK and attributed to your account, a receipt will be emailed to you.

In accordance with Small TALK policies, outstanding invoices of 2 or more sessions will result in a hold being placed on services until payment has been received.

NDIS Agency Managed Clients

In order for Small TALK to claim from your child's funding, we need a current Service Agreement (signed document) and Service Booking (funding booking made on the portal). A Service Agreement must be made at the beginning of each plan to allocate funds to Small TALK for claiming of therapy sessions.



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You will need to notify your therapist as soon as possible when you are going to have a review and/or when your new plan becomes active so that a new Service Agreement can be discussed. Once the Service Agreement has been developed, you will need to return it to Small TALK before your next session (in clinic, via post or email) or notify Small TALK that you have returned it to school with your child. Failure to return the Service Agreement will result in a hold being placed on services until the signed agreement has been received.

Following each session, your invoice will be submitted directly to NDIS via the portal. Once funds have been received by Small TALK and attributed to your account, a receipt will be emailed to you.

NDIS Plan Managed Clients

You will need to have a current signed Service Agreement with Small TALK for sessions to be claimed. A Service Agreement must be made at the beginning of each plan to allocate funds to Small TALK for claiming of therapy sessions.

Following each session, your invoice will be sent to your Plan Manager for payment. Once funds have been received by Small TALK and attributed to your account, a receipt will be emailed to you.

Phone Policy

We have a small waiting area in the practice, which can become busy and noisy when families are waiting, or entering and exiting.



In order to keep the noise to a minimum for your child, other children, and our receptionist who may be taking calls, we ask that you please do not take calls in the waiting room area.

We understand that you may need to take calls while in the clinic and ask that you go to the backyard area where there is a table and chairs you can use. We would prefer calls be taken out the back rather than the front as frequent entering and exiting via the front door disturbs others and is not safe for children in the area.

Phone Use in Therapy Rooms

To improve client engagement, parent collaboration and to provide the best environment for your child to achieve their goals, we also ask that you refrain from using your phone or electronic device in our therapy rooms.

We are passionate about providing best practice and helping your child achieve as much as possible while accessing our services. Given that most of your child's learning occurs between sessions not within them, it is vital that you are an active participant in the session.

If you need to take an urgent call during your child's session we understand, but ask that you step out of the room and out to the back of the clinic to take the call. Please do not take calls in the hallway, and, please be mindful that frequently stepping in and out of the room to take calls is disruptive to your child and others in the practice.

Active Session Participation

Instead of using your phone we ask that you:

- Be involved in the therapy by observing and asking questions
- Think of ways you can integrate the practice at home



small TALK
speech therapy

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- Be hands on in the therapy and "have a go"
- Take notes on paper
- Discuss any current difficulties at home and school
- Keep your therapist up to date with changes in therapies, medications, schools and family situations.

"The bulk of
children's learning
occurs **between**
sessions not
during them"

Dr Tim Moore



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Marketing

From time to time, during therapy activities we will take photos and videos of our team working with children, and work produced by the children, to capture our culture and approach at Small TALK speech therapy. These photos may then be shared in the public domain via our website, newsletter, information marketing material (such as flyers, posters) social media pages (including our Facebook page).

If you agree to permit small TALK speech therapy to take photographs/videos of your child and their work for public, please [complete the Media Consent Form](#) (see Forms section of this booklet) and return it to our Practice Manager. The consent, if signed, will remain effective until such time as you advise small TALK speech therapy of your withdrawal of consent in writing.

If you do not agree, strike a line through the page and return it to reception with your other completed forms.



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General Parental Consent Form

In the Forms section of this kit, in addition to individual specific consent forms; there is a General Parental Consent Form which must be completed by all clients upon engagement.

This form covers a number of standard items we require your consent in relation to, including:

- Payment of fees and charges;
- Sharing of medical information and reports with other medical professionals;
- Voice and video recordings for the purpose of analysis and assessment;
- Text message reminders for appointments;
- Parents attendance at therapy sessions and supervision responsibilities; and
- Physical guidance during therapy.

Any questions or concerns regarding this form, or other consent forms located in the Forms section of this booklet, should be raised with the Clinical Director, Shae Rodgers as soon as practicable.



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We Welcome Your Feedback

As part of our commitment to open communication and continuous improvement, we encourage both our staff and our clients to provide constructive feedback (whether positive or negative) on our services.

Clients can provide feedback, formally or informally, to their key contact within the Small TALK team or our Practice Director.

We value your feedback and will conduct anonymous surveys during the year. You can leave anonymous feedback at anytime via our website <http://www.smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au/resources/feedback/>

Feedback forms are available from our practice Administration. A copy is also included in this kit in the Forms section.

All feedback received will be recorded by Small TALK and appropriate consideration and/or action taken in relation.

Where appropriate, Small TALK will advise the person/s providing the feedback with information regarding the action and/or outcomes taken and achieved by Small TALK in relation.

Privacy & Confidentiality

Small TALK speech therapy is committed to safeguarding the confidentiality of any personal or health information of individuals by:

- Creating procedures that protect privacy with regard to the collection, storage and disclosure of Personal Information; and
- Complying with the Australian Privacy Principles and the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).

Collection of Personal and Sensitive Information

Small TALK speech therapy collects Personal Information on individuals only with their consent. Generally, we collect your Personal Information and Sensitive Information directly from you. We collect information through various means. We will not collect information unless it is necessary for the functions or activities of Small TALK speech therapy.

There are situations where we may also obtain Personal Information about you from a third party source (for example a GP). If we collect information about you in this way, we will take reasonable steps to contact you and ensure that you are aware of the purpose for which we are collecting your Personal Information and the organisations to which we may disclose your information, subject to any exceptions under the *Privacy Act*.

Use and disclosure of Personal and Sensitive Information

We only use Personal Information for the purposes for which it is given to us, or for the purposes which are related to one of our functions or activities. Identifying personal information will not be disclosed for marketing purposes.

The Personal Information we collect from you will be used primarily to render services related to Small TALK speech therapy services and business. We may also disclose your Personal Information to other external organisations including:

- government departments/agencies who provide funding for Small TALK services;
- doctors and health care professionals, who assist us to deliver our services; and
- our professional advisors, including our accountants, auditors and lawyers.

Except as set out above, Small TALK will not disclose an individual's Personal Information to a third party unless one of the following applies:

- the individual has consented;
- the individual would reasonably expect us to use that information for another purpose related to the purpose for which it was collected (or in the case of sensitive information – directly related to the purpose for which it was collected);
- it is otherwise required or authorised by law;
- it will prevent or lessen a serious threat to somebody's life, health or safety or to the public health or safety;
- it is reasonably necessary for us to take appropriate action in relation to suspected unlawful activity, or misconduct of a serious nature that relates to our functions or activities;
- it is reasonably necessary to assist in locating a missing person;
- it is reasonably necessary to establish, exercise or defend a claim at law;
- it is reasonably necessary for a confidential dispute resolution process;
- it is necessary to provide health services;
- it is necessary for the management, funding or monitoring of a health service relevant to public health or public safety;
- it is necessary for research or the compilation or analysis of statistics relevant to public health or public safety;
- it is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of a law conducted by an enforcement body, in this case Small TALK will make a written note of the disclosure;
- a permitted general situation exists, as defined in s16A of the *Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Personal Privacy) Act 2012*; or
- a permitted health situation exists as outlined by s16B of the *Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Personal Privacy) Act 2012*.

Our therapists use email as a communication method to provide clients with items such as: newsletters, invoices, general business updates, progress notes and clinical reports etc. These items may contain your personal or sensitive information. Whilst your information will only be provided to you and other approved (by you) parties in this manner, clients need to be aware that there is a risk that this information may be accessed by other parties without authorisation (for example, if our email system is 'hacked' or a virus is received). Small TALK will take all reasonable steps to mitigate

this risk, including regularly changing software passwords, not accessing software/emails from unauthorised computers, following a strict Information Technology policy etc.

Security of Personal and Sensitive Information

Small TALK speech therapy takes reasonable steps to protect the Personal Information and Sensitive Information we hold against misuse, interference, loss, unauthorised access, modification and disclosure.

These steps include password protection for accessing our electronic IT systems, securing paper files in locked cabinets and applying physical access restrictions. Only authorised personnel are permitted to access our systems and controlled premises. When Personal Information is no longer required, it is destroyed in a secure manner, or will be de-identified.

Small TALK uses cloud-based technology (such as iCloud and Dropbox), which may be located offshore, to store client records such as photos, reports, file notes, and videos, and will take all reasonable measures to protect your Personal Information by:

- gaining your consent to the disclosure; or
- ensuring that the country of destination has similar protections in relation to privacy, and does not breach the Australian Privacy Principles; or
- entering into contractual arrangements with the recipient of your Personal Information that safeguards your privacy.

Alternatively if the information is required under Australian law, or if the information is required or authorised under international agreement to which Australia is a party to, or if is reasonably necessary by an enforcement body it may be shared.

Note: All our staff are bound by confidentiality and privacy policies, procedures and agreements, which apply both during and following employment with Small TALK. This includes the provision that if any staff comes into contact with a client of small TALK outside of the clinic they will not acknowledge or approach the client – in order to safeguard the clients' confidentiality rights.

Access to and correction of Personal Information

If an individual requests access to the Personal Information we hold about them, or seeks to change that Personal Information, upon this request we will give the individual access, unless:

- the request does not relate to the Personal Information of the person making the request;
- the request would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of other individuals;
- providing access would pose a serious threat to the life, health or safety of a person or to public health or public safety;
- providing access would create an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others;
- the request is frivolous and vexatious;
- the request relates to existing or anticipated legal proceedings;
- providing access would prejudice negotiations with the individuals making the request;
- access would be unlawful;
- denial of access is authorised or required by law;
- access would prejudice an action in relation to suspected unlawful activity, or misconduct of a serious nature relating to the functions or activities of Small TALK speech therapy;
- access discloses a 'commercially sensitive' decision making process or information; or
- any other reason that is provided for in the APPs or in the *Privacy Act*.

Requests for access and/or correction should be made to the Practice Director. For security reasons, any request must be made in writing with proof of identity. This is necessary to ensure that Personal Information is provided only to the correct individuals and that the privacy of other persons is preserved.

In the first instance, Small TALK will assume (unless otherwise informed) that any request relates to current records. These current records will include Personal Information which is included in Small TALK's databases and in paper files which may be used on a day-to-day basis.



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If we deny access to information, we will set out our reasons for denying access in writing. Where there is a dispute about the right to access information or forms of access, this will be dealt with in accordance with our complaints procedure. More information about this process can be obtained from the Practice Director.

If an individual is able to establish that Personal Information Small TALK holds about her/him/their child is not accurate, complete or up to date, Small TALK will take reasonable steps to correct our records unless it is impracticable or unlawful to do so. In the event a request for change is refused Small TALK will set out, in writing, the reasons for refusal and the mechanism by which you can complain. We will not charge an individual for making the request or correcting the information.

Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint about our privacy practices, service operations, staff or our handling of your Personal Information or Sensitive Information, please notify our Manager or Practice Director and/or completed a Client Feedback Form.

All efforts will be made to address complaints and achieve an effective resolution of your complaint within a reasonable timeframe. In most cases this will be 30 days or as soon as practicable. However if the matter is complex, the resolution of the complaint may take longer. All complaints and outcomes will be recorded.

In the event that an anonymous complaint is received we will note the issues raised and where appropriate, investigate and resolve them appropriately.

Clients have a 'right to complain' and where possible clients and others are encouraged to raise any concerns directly with the onsite manager or director who are trained to make sure clients of the practice feel confident that any feedback or complaints made at the practice will be handled appropriately.

We believe most complaints can be responded to and resolved at the time the client or other people such as carers (relative, friend other consumer) makes them known to us.

Under the Health Services (Conciliation & Review) Act 1987 people with complaints should try to resolve them directly with the health service provider. If a satisfactory outcome is not achieved then the complaint can go directly to the Health Services



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Commissioner for action. The public may also call the Office of the Health Services Commissioner at any time concerning a query or to report a complaint.

NDIS clients can voice their concerns with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards commission. Please visit <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/>

Under national and state privacy laws: Privacy Amendment Act (2012), this practice must provide and adhere to a complaints process for privacy issues and those related to the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs).

What clients think about Small TALK

"Team Small Talk, still unsurpassed after all these years" – anonymous, 2018

In our recent client survey, our clients let us know the features of Small TALK that they enjoyed:

- Clear concise expectations, well developed plans and regular communication surrounding goal and progress
- Very well structured operation
- Very accommodating
- Reliability and consistency with the staff and the appointment times. I also like how they recognise when a change of therapist is required to help shake things up and keep learning fun and challenging.
- Friendly and accommodating
- Professional, welcoming, organised, resourceful, efficient, results
- Consider the needs of each child very well
- We also appreciate the written goals and report after each session which the therapist emails us. It is very useful to pass these to the school so everyone is working together towards my child's common goal.

When asked to rate our therapy programs and approach on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent):

- 77.8% of respondents rated a 5
- 15.5% of respondents rated a 4

When asked to rate their child's therapist on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (outstanding):

- 85.2% of respondents rated a 5
- 14.8% of respondents rated a 4

When asked to rate our practice environment on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (outstanding):

- 77.8% of respondents rated a 5
- 15.5% of respondents rated a 4



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Frequently Asked Questions

What are the Small TALK office hours?

Our office hours are generally 9 –5:30pm AEST (AEDT in summer) Monday to Friday.

Who are the Small TALK team?

We are a small, dedicated team of certified practising Speech Pathologists. You can read more about our backgrounds, qualifications and passions on our website at www.smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au under the 'About small TALK' tab.

Why one hour appointments?

At Small TALK, we strive to deliver a family focused speech therapy service; this means that we spend time within your child's session providing you with knowledge, skills and strategies to help your child.

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and other special needs benefit from additional repetition of tasks and research suggests that these children need up to 20 hours of intervention per week.

To ensure that families are involved in their child's speech therapy and offer maximum benefit to your child sessions are 60 minutes in length.

Do you visit schools and preschools?

There are a range of benefits that can be gained from school visit appointments:

- Assessment of the child's skills in their social environment.
- Therapy goals that need to be targeted utilising the child's peers.
- Working in partnership with teachers and education staff to increase awareness of your child's strengths and difficulties. Providing strategies that are appropriate for use with your child and education about how to deliver these consistently.

Depending on the location of your child's school, outreach visits may be available upon request.



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We want your child's educators to be involved in your child's program and are mindful that this can be difficult when accessing speech therapy via clinic visits. We make an effort to keep in contact with families via phone, email, and social media.

Please contact our Practice Director directly if you have questions about this, as it will depend on your child's circumstances.

Will your therapists just 'play' with my child?

Absolutely not. Every single task we use at Small TALK speech therapy has a purpose and directly relates to your child's weekly goals. We often use play as a learning tool for younger children. We understand how important it is for your child to be learning as much as they can in their sessions. This is why we use a structured therapy approach with many of our clients, setting an expectation that they are in the clinic to learn.

We offer our clients positive rewards and clear feedback regarding their performance so expectations are clear and transparent. Tasks are never pitched at a level that is too hard for the child, as we want your child to thrive on learning as they achieve more and more!

How long will my child need therapy?

Each and every child and family is different at this question is best answered by your speech pathologist once she has gained an understanding of your child's difficulties and the family goals. As a general guide many of our clients with a small amount of goals and mild communication difficulties engage in therapy for around 6 months, clients with more complex and severe communication difficulties often engage in our therapy services for a number of years. Our goal is always to progress your child towards achieving their goals in the most efficient way possible, while ensuring that the skills learnt are maintained and generalised beyond the therapy setting.



small TALK
speech therapy

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Forms

Please find attached the following forms for your completion:

- General Parental Consent Form
- Media Consent Form (optional)
- Client Information & Welcome Kit Acknowledgement Form
- Client Feedback Form (as required)
- Client Questionnaire

Please return completed forms to Admin on or before your child's first appointment.



General Parental Consent Form

By signing this form, I hereby give my consent for:

- My child to receive private speech pathology services from small TALK speech therapy and agree to **pay all associated fees** for these services in accordance with Small TALK policies;
- Small TALK speech therapy to contact and **share information and reports** with education staff, medical practitioners, specialists and health professionals involved in my child's care;
- Small TALK staff to make voice and video **recordings** of my child to be used solely for the purpose of analysis and individual therapy planning (including social skills modelling);
- Small TALK to send me **text message reminders** for my child's speech therapy sessions;
- Physical guidance contact between my child and their treating speech therapist as necessary. I acknowledge that all care is taken whilst working with my child however **physical contact** may be required for guidance during therapy sessions, and that such contact will only be used to ensure the best outcome for my child. I understand physical guidance may involve hand-over-hand prompting, guiding my child into a seated position etc.

In addition, by signing below, I confirm that I understand and agree:

- To **pay all fees and charges** for my child's speech pathology services on or before the date of the session;
- To **be present** for least the first 5 minutes, and last 10 minutes, of my child's session unless otherwise advised/agreed;
- I am responsible for **supervising my child/ren** whilst at Small TALK and will remain at/or nearby the premises for the duration of their appointment;
- That if my **payments** become in **arrears** of over 2 sessions, and I have not come to an alternative arrangement with small TALK speech therapy, I understand that my child's **services will be ceased** and all necessary means may be taken to recover the funds, which may include the addition of legal fees (to my due monies) resulting from the process to recover the debt.

I _____ (parent/guardian name) consent to the above

Terms and Conditions in relation to _____ (child's name).

Signed _____ Date _____



Media Consent Form

(optional; complete or strike through)

By signing this form, I understand I am providing my consent for Small TALK speech therapy to take photos and videos of my child, and work produced by my child, during therapy sessions. I understand this consent will remain effective until such time as I advise Small TALK of my withdrawal of consent in writing.

I acknowledge that these photos/videos may then be shared in the public domain (for access by third parties) via the Small TALK website, newsletter, informational marketing material (e.g. flyers, posters) and social media pages.

Further, I agree to the following:

- Small TALK speech therapy are able to photograph and publish photographs/work of my child as many times as it requires in the ways/forums mentioned above;
- My child's photograph/work may be reproduced either in colour or in black and white;
- My child's photograph/work will not be used for any purpose other than for general promotion, marketing, training speech pathology students and promoting awareness of the profession;
- Any photographs will be kept for no longer than is necessary for the abovementioned purposes and will be stored and disposed of securely; and
- While every effort will be made to protect the identity of my child, small TALK cannot guarantee that my child will not be able to be identified from the photograph/work.

Student's name: _____

Signature of parent/caregiver: _____ Date: _____

Signature of student: _____ (if appropriate) Date: _____



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Client Information & Welcome Kit Acknowledgement Form

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read and understand, and consent to the information (including requirements of clients) contained in the Client Information and Welcome Kit, such as:

- Eligibility for early intervention;
- Infection control;
- Cancellation policy;
- Travel policy; and
- Privacy and Confidentiality.

Further, I understand it is my obligation at all times it is my responsibility to fully comply with all of the requirements and responsibilities.

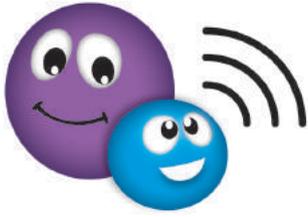
I acknowledge that the policies contained within the Kit may be updated or otherwise modified, amended or canceled from time-to-time and that Small TALK will attempt to advise me of any changes as they occur. I also acknowledge that it is my responsibility to stay up to date with these policies and how they apply to me.

Child's name

Parent/caregiver name

Parent/caregiver signature

Date



Client Feedback Form

(please keep for future reference)

a) What service/s is Small TALK currently providing to your child, or have provided in the past?

b) Overall, are you satisfied with the service provided to you by Small TALK? Why / why not?

c) How well does your therapist support you in understanding and nurturing your child's communication therapy journey?



Client Questionnaire

Name of child: _____ Gender of child: M/F

Child's date of birth: _____

Name of parent/guardian 1: _____ Gender: M/F

Name of parent/guardian 2: _____ Gender: M/F

Preferred Email address: _____

Street address: _____

Suburb: _____ Postcode: _____

Telephone (**tick** best contact for SMS appointment reminders)

Parent/Guardian 1 Mobile: _____ Work: _____

Parent/Guardian 2 Mobile: _____ Work: _____

Home _____

Preferred contact method for appointment scheduling (*Please **tick** and add number/email*):

SMS: _____

Phone call: _____

Email: _____

Please select preferred contact method for written correspondence (*e.g. reports*):

Email _____

Post _____

SMS _____

Facebook Messenger _____

Education

Preschool or Day Care attended: _____

School attended: _____ Year: _____

Days attended: Mon Tues Wed Thurs Fri



Teacher's name/Director's Name: _____

Comment on your child's progress at school: _____

Family

Immediate family residing in household (names and relationships):

Immediate family residing outside the household (names and relationships):

Languages spoken at home: _____

We are a culturally sensitive practice, is there anything we can do to support your culture, beliefs and values?

Pets in the family home: _____

Medical

Any current diagnoses?: _____

Any current medications taken?: _____

Reason for the medication: _____

Any food allergies?: _____

Please enter your child's health professional details below:

- Please provide recent reports where available via email or post
- Please tick the professionals who you would like us to share information about your child's program (e.g. written reports)

General Practitioner: _____

Previous Speech Pathologist: _____



- Paediatrician: _____
- Psychologist/Psychiatrist: _____
- Optometrist: (eyes tested? Results?) _____
- Audiologist: (hearing tested? Results?) _____
- Physiotherapist: _____
- Occupational Therapist: _____
- Ear Nose and Throat Specialist: _____
- Other: _____

Does your child have a family **history** of:

- Speech sound difficulties
- Language
- Stuttering
- Dyslexia
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Other: _____
- Delayed development
- Developmental disability
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Ear infections

About your child

History

When did your child say their first word? _____

When did your child begin to combine words together? _____

When did your child begin to use short sentences? _____

Did your child have any difficulties feeding as a baby? _____

Current:

Describe your child's communication:

Listening _____



Speaking _____

Describe the way your child interacts with peers the same age and unfamiliar adults:

Describe your child's behaviour/personality:

stubborn, determined, easy going, resists change

Please describe your child's eating habits: fussy messy limited healthy select diet

List your child's current interests/hobbies/activities/favourite toys and games:

Please describe your main **concerns** about your child's communication:

Please describe your main **goals** for your child:

