



Client Information & Welcome Kit

7/394 Maitland Rd, Mayfield NSW 2304
3/149 Ambleside Cct Lakelands NSW 2282
Ph. 1300 651 704
www.smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au

Information correct as of January 2024



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Welcome from our Practice Director



Welcome to the Small Talk family where our mission is to help children find their voice so they can connect with others in their world.

Our Speech Pathologists are passionate about outcome driven therapies that improve participation in everyday life. Our team are driven by our values to Nurture, Understand, Support and Hope.

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.

Our team of therapists provide home practise notes following every therapy session so you will always be part of the goal setting and review process. To foster collaboration with our families we provide consistent and thorough written communication about therapy goals and outcomes.

As the practice director it is one of my highest priorities to ensure consistency of service within our therapy team.

If you ever have anything you wish to discuss related to our services, please contact me directly.



Shae Rodgers,
Director

Email:

shae@smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au

Our Mission and Values

About Us

Our clinic was created in 2011 with a mission to improve the lives of families with Neurodivergent children. Our practice is well known for providing services in the areas of early intervention, neurodivergent affirming support and AAC to help children connect and communicate with others.

Our team of speech pathologists are passionate about delivering effective evidence-based services that value and respect every child's unique strengths and communication preferences. We provide home practise notes and resources along with each session. To foster collaboration with our families we provide consistent and thorough communication about therapy goals and outcomes.

Get to know our team on our website:

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

Our Mission

Our our mission is to help children find their voice so they can connect with others in their world.

Our Values

Our practice is guided by our values to:



Nurturing your child's strengths

Hope for a bright future

Understanding your challenges

Supporting your family

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
- Have your privacy maintained
- Be included in making decisions and choices about your child's program
- Your privacy is always maintained
- To provide feedback or make a complaint, in a respectful way, and have your concerns addressed promptly.
- Children are free to express themselves in their own way including loud noises, we are respectful of every child's communication method.



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 any 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.
- Notify us of appointment changes and cancellations with notice in accordance with our policies.
- 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
- Work with us to develop and maintain a risk assessment and management plan that is relevant for your child.
- Keep noise in the clinic to a minimum and abide by our clinic policies including our "Phone Usage" policy.

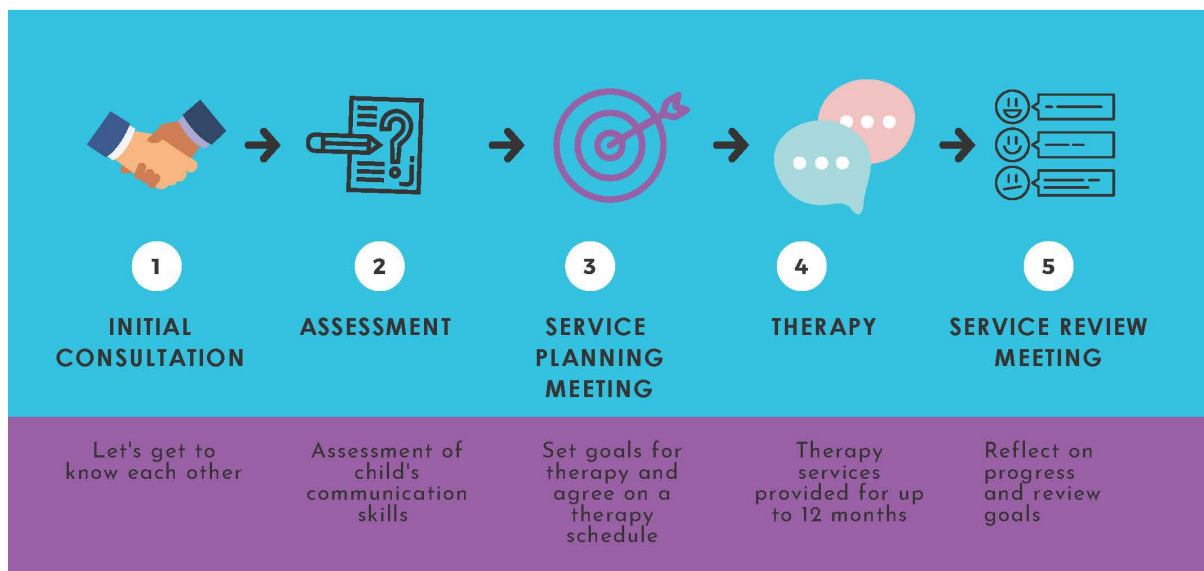
Our Services

Small TALK speech therapy is a paediatric family focused service with specialised skills in assisting neurodivergent children, non-speaking children, and emergent communicators (late talkers).

We work with children from toddlers to teens from the age of 1 until the completion of Year 12. We can provide services in our clinic, at local schools and early education centres, in your home and through online video using Zoom (Telehealth).

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

Service Pathway



Read more about each service on our website

<https://www.smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au/our-services/>

View our [schedule of fees](#) to have a look at what we include within each appointment type.

The recommended frequency of therapy will be advised after your consultation and assessment; however, therapy visits are usually **weekly or fortnightly** depending on your families' goals. We can also offer families a block of communication strategy sessions where we focus on upskilling parents to support communication growth at home.

Workshops

We deliver workshops or In-Services online or at your childcare Centre, school, clinic or community setting. Some of our most popular topics are listed below:

- Speech Pathology and School Readiness
- All about AAC!
- What is AAC and how can we support our clients/students
 - Speech and Language Milestones for preschoolers
 - Using visuals in the home or preschool
 - How to support early communication development in childcare settings

Read more about our workshops:

<https://www.smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au/our-services/parent-workshops/>



Visual Supports

We have a range of ready-made visual supports for that can be used in your home or at your child's school or preschool.

Have a look at our visual support packages in the clinic waiting room or in our online shop.

<https://www.smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au/shop/>



Additional Supports

We are passionate about providing as much support to local families as we can. Along with our direct services we also provide support with online and in clinic information sharing.

Click each of the supports below to be directed to the link.

Blog

Tips to build your child's communication skills

Facebook Group

(Private) to share news and resources

Lending Library

A collection of our favourite reference books

Pinterest

Our favourite podcasts, books, games

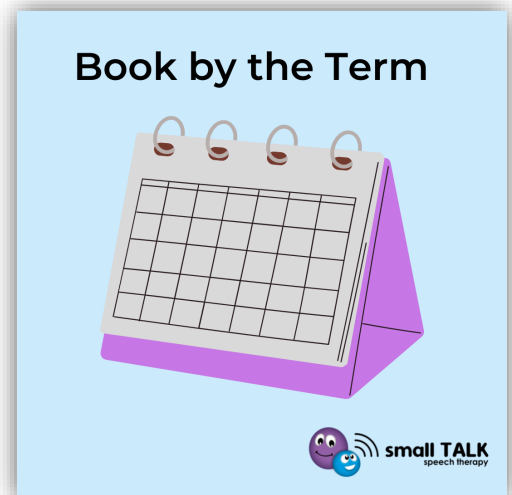
*AI Utilization Disclaimer: In our practice, we incorporate Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology to assist with various facets of our operations, including but not limited to, business management, marketing strategies, clinical support, and the development of therapy materials. While AI contributes to the efficiency and innovation of our services, all clinical decisions and therapeutic approaches are ultimately guided by our licensed speech pathologists' expertise, in adherence to professional standards and ethical practices.

Ongoing Appointments

Small TALK speech therapy services are in high demand and we often have families waiting to receive services. Small TALK speech therapy has a wide range of services and we recognise that families require professional advice and support in choosing an appropriate provider 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.

If you are offered an initial consultation and/or assessment session for your child, this is to enable our therapists to discuss your child's needs and make professional recommendations on the most appropriate service. If the recommended service has no availability, then your child may be placed on a short waiting list or we can assist you in finding a service that meets your needs with availability.

We create our therapy schedules on a **term-by-term basis** and clients are consulted on their appointment preferences every term. Appointments are booked for one school term (including holidays) and an appointment list is provided. We prioritise regular appointments for our clients and therefore set aside these appointments for the term. We ask that you make a commitment to services for the duration of the term and advise us of changes you wish to make for the following term. We encourage you to notify us in advance if you are unable to attend on certain dates and we can try to reschedule the appointment for you.



Online Portal

We offer an online appointment system where clients can book, view and manage their appointments and invoices. Invoices can be viewed and downloaded in your client portal.

You can access the client portal by logging into the website
<https://www.smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au/>

Confirmation of Appointments

Appointment lists are provided at the beginning of each term. You should also receive an SMS reminder 3 days prior to your appointment.



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Payment for Sessions

- Invoice emailed on the day of the session and accessible in the [client portal](#).
- Payments accepted in-clinic, by credit card, or direct deposit.
- Credit cards can be securely kept on file for convenient processing so we can do so on your behalf on the day of the session.
- Timely payment is essential to avoid scheduling holds on future appointments.

Service Agreements for All Clients

All clients, including NDIS clients, require a current Service Agreement with Small TALK in order to ensure that the terms of service, billing and rights and responsibilities of each party are clear.



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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.

To view more details about our OH&S measures please click [here](#)

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 all regularly trained in infection control principles and our cleaning procedures are thorough.

To view more details about our Infection Control measures please click [here](#)

Cancellation Policy

At Small TALK Speech Therapy, we strive to offer high-quality services to our clients. Due to the high demand for our services and the extensive preparation our therapists undertake for each appointment, we have implemented the following cancellation policy:

Scheduling and Reminders:

- Appointments are scheduled one term in advance. You will receive an appointment list for your convenience.
- Please inform us as soon as possible of any changes to your schedule.
- An sms reminder will be sent three days prior to each appointment.

Late Cancellation:

- Appointments must be cancelled by **10am, two business days before your appointment** to avoid a late cancellation fee.
- Late cancellations will incur a fee equivalent to the full session rate.

Failure to Attend:

- If no notice is given and the appointment is missed, the full appointment fee is payable.
- For NDIS participants, this fee will be claimed from your NDIS funds.

Repeat Cancellations:

Consistent cancellations or no-shows may lead to a review of your ongoing services with us at the discretion of management. Four or more late cancellations or no shows may result in cancellation of your appointment schedule for the term.

Late Arrivals:

- Please arrive on time. Late arrivals will incur the full session fee, and we cannot extend your session time.



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- Please call us or send an sms to let us know if you are running late to your appointment.
- Arrivals more than 15 minutes late without prior notification will result in the forfeiture of the appointment.

Payments for Missed Appointments:

- Our receptionist will contact you to arrange payment.
- Payment for missed appointments is required before confirming your next appointment.
- NDIS funds will be claimed on the day of the missed appointment for NDIS participants.
- Private Health or Medicare Funding cannot cover these payments.
- If you are a self-funded or NDIS self-managed client we require a credit card be placed securely on file to cover fees incurred as a result of cancellations.

Cancellation Alternatives:

You may opt for a video session instead of an in-person appointment, starting 10 minutes after the scheduled time to allow for preparation of online materials.

Our cancellation policy is essential to ensure that we can continue to provide high-quality, timely services to all our clients. We appreciate your understanding and adherence to these policies.

Please review the cancellation infographic for a summary of this policy.

*Please ask reception for further details

I need to cancel my session

Call, email or SMS
Small TALK
BEFORE 10am
2 business days
before your
session.

No fee
Option to
reschedule

Call, email or SMS
Small TALK
AFTER 10am
2 business days
before your
session.

Late Cancellation
The full session
fee payable

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

No Show fee
Full session fee
payable

Option of Video

Video Session

*Session will commence
10 minutes after
scheduled time to allow
preparation of online
materials

*using 'Zoom' platform (requires
strong internet connection and
personal iPad/computer)

Out of Clinic Travel Policy

At Small TALK, we understand the need for flexibility in therapy settings. Our Out of Clinic sessions extend our services beyond the confines of our clinics to locations such as homes, schools, or other community settings. This policy outlines the charges and guidelines for these sessions, ensuring we can provide effective and accessible services to our clients wherever they may be.

Out of Clinic Radius:

Our services are available within an 8 km radius of each Small TALK clinic.

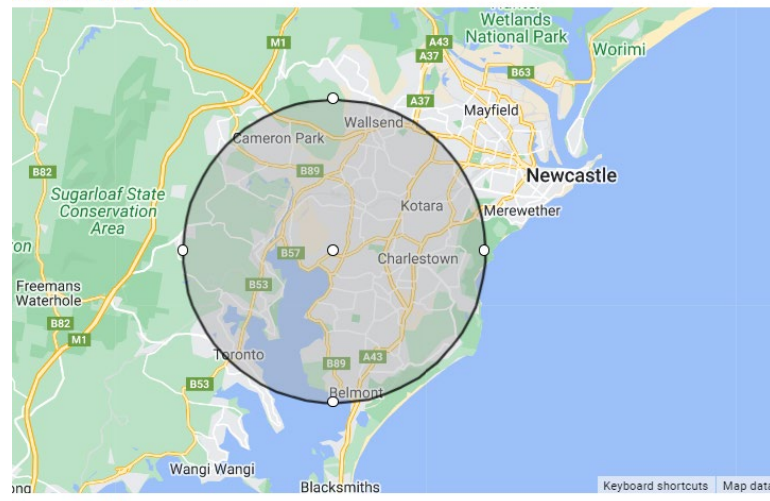
Mayfield Clinic Radius

Radius: 8000.00 Meters



Lakelands Clinic Radius

Radius: 8000.00 Meters





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Travel Charges:

- Out of clinic sessions, including home, school, or other locations, are billed at \$193.99/hour.
- Travel is charged at \$3.23/minute and \$1.00/km.
- Each client will be provided with an individual travel quote for the term based on this rate.

Example Travel Calculation:

Travel to School, 8 minutes from Mayfield clinic (10km away), would cost:

\$25.84 (8 minutes x \$3.23) + \$10.00 (10 km x \$1.00) each way.

Total Travel Cost = \$71.68

Travel Calculation Method:

Calculated using Google Maps, set at the specific time of travel (e.g., 9:00 am).

Apportionment of Travel Costs:

When servicing multiple clients in the same area, travel costs can be shared. This will be discussed and agreed upon in advance with all involved clients.

Cancellation Policy:

Please refer to our Cancellation Policy for information on fees related to unattended appointments. Failure to cancel an out-of-clinic therapy session which results in a clinician travelling without purpose will incur a no-show fee as well as fees for any travel undertaken.

Variability of Charges:

Travel charges are quoted per term but may vary weekly due to unforeseen schedule changes. We strive to communicate any changes as promptly as possible.



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Outreach Client Information

Confirmation of Appointments

Appointment lists are provided at the beginning of each term. You should also receive an SMS reminder.

It is your responsibility and not the schools to communicate changes to the appointment schedule as soon as possible to avoid unnecessary travel and fees.

Payment for Sessions

- Invoice emailed on the day of the session and accessible in the [client portal](#).
- Payments accepted in-clinic, by credit card, or direct deposit.
- Credit cards can be securely kept on file for convenient processing so we can do so on your behalf on the day of the session.
- Timely payment is essential to avoid scheduling holds on future appointments.

Service Agreements for Outreach Clients

All clients, including NDIS, require a current Service Agreement with Small TALK in order to ensure that the terms of service, billing and rights and responsibilities of each party are clear. Service agreements will outline the maximum travel charges you can expect to pay for services.

Our therapists re-evaluate their schedules at the beginning of each term, and as such, travel charges may vary from term to term depending on therapist and school timetables. Changes to your agreed travel fee may occur after an agreement is made by both parties. You will be provided with information about expected travel charges on a term by term basis.

Phone Policy

At Small TALK, we are committed to creating a therapeutic environment conducive to learning collaboration. We greatly appreciate your support and cooperation in adhering to our phone use policy, which helps us maintain this environment for all clients and staff.



Waiting Area:

Our waiting area is often a busy space.

To ensure a calm and focused environment, particularly important for the children and our staff, we kindly request the following:

- Please refrain from taking calls in the waiting room.
- For necessary phone calls, we have provided a designated area in the backyard, equipped with a table and chairs for your convenience.
- We recommend using this backyard area for calls to minimise disruptions and maintain the safety of children in the area.

No Phone Use in Therapy Rooms:

To optimise the effectiveness of therapy sessions, we request that you avoid using phones or electronic devices in our therapy rooms.

This policy helps:

- Improve client engagement and parent collaboration.
- Create the best possible therapeutic environment for achieving goals.
- Encourage your active participation, critical as most learning for your child occurs between sessions.

Urgent Calls During Sessions:

We understand that urgent situations can arise. If you need to take an urgent call during your child's session:

- Please step out of the therapy room and use the designated area at the back of the clinic.
- Avoid taking calls in the hallway to minimise disruptions.
- Remember that frequently moving in and out of the therapy room can be disruptive to your child and others.
- Consider sending an SMS instead of taking a call.

Video Recording:

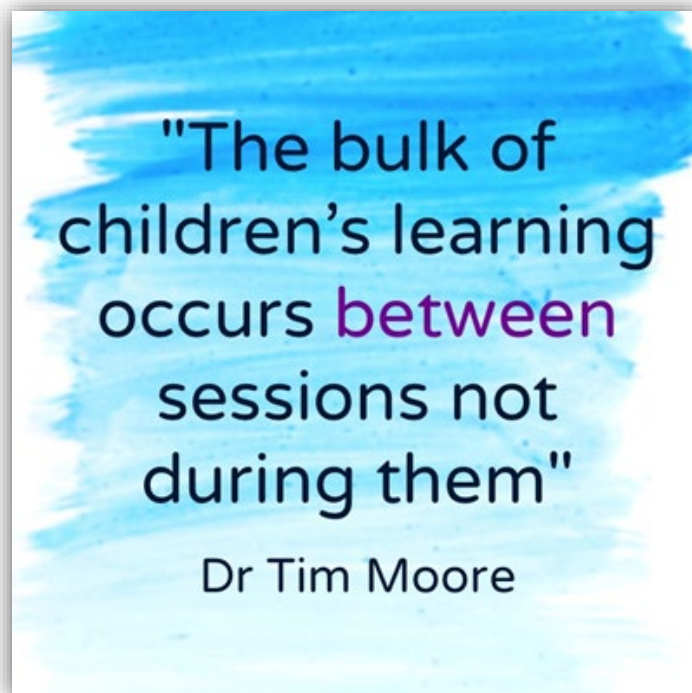
We ask that parents refrain from video recording sessions without prior permission from the therapist. This is to respect the privacy and therapeutic process of all involved.

Active Session Participation:

Instead of using your phone, we encourage you to:

- Actively engage in the therapy by observing and asking questions.
- Consider ways to integrate the therapy into home practice.
- Participate hands-on in therapy activities.
- Take notes on paper to remember important points.
- Discuss any current challenges at home or school.
- Keep your therapist updated on any changes in therapies, medications, schools, and family situations.

Your cooperation with this policy is invaluable to the success of the therapy sessions and the overall environment at Small TALK. We thank you for your understanding and commitment to creating the best possible experience for your child and our community.





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Media Consent

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.

If you have provided media consent 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 have not provided media consent photos, audio and videos may be collected during sessions for clinical purposes. These will not be used in any media or publicised without your consent.

Please complete the Media Consent Form provided in your welcome email to let us know how you would like your child's media handled.

The consent, if signed, will remain effective until such time as you advise small TALK speech therapy of your withdrawal of consent in writing.



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Forms to Complete

Before services are provided families are asked to complete questionnaires and forms to help us get to know your child.

You will be sent the following forms to complete electronically.

- Client Service Consent Form
- Media Consent Form
- General Risk Assessments
- Client Questionnaire

These forms **must be completed by all clients 3 days before their first appointment.**

We are happy to discuss any questions or concerns regarding these forms, please contact the clinic receptionist.



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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 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/>

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 to the feedback received.

What To Do If There Is a Problem

Complaints

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.

If you do not feel comfortable raising a concern or complaint in person, you can provide details via the feedback form (details above), phone (1300 651 704) or by emailing one of the following:

- Administration - admin@smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au
- Managing Speech Pathologist – bec@smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au
- Director – shae@smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au

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.

We endeavour to resolve complaints as quickly as possible with a satisfactory outcome for all parties, however, if you feel that your complaint has not been handled satisfactorily, or you feel that the resolution and outcomes were unsatisfactory, there are a number of organisations that you can contact to take the matter further.

Please click [here](#) to view the complaints policy in detail

Speech Pathology Australia

<https://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au>

1300 368 835

NDIS Commission

<https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au>

1800 035 544



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The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (Oaic)

1300 363 992

<http://www.oaic.gov.au>

Health Care Complaints Commission

<https://www.hccc.nsw.gov.au>

[1800 043 159](https://www.hccc.nsw.gov.au)

Australian Human Rights Commission

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au>

Incidents

Small TALK staff follow a strict incident reporting procedure to ensure the safety and well-being of clients, families and staff.

As per the Small TALK incident policy, an incident can be defined as:

- any injury to a person; or
- damage to property; or
- a “near-miss” where there was potential for injury or damage

Please click [here](#) to read the Incident Policy

Advocacy

Small TALK acknowledges the important role of advocates (including independent advocates) and are required as NDIS providers to cooperate with, and facilitate arrangements for, advocates (including independent advocates) and other representatives of persons with disability who are affected by complaints or incidents and who wish to be independently supported in that process by an advocate or other representative.

Small TALK are happy to assist you in finding an advocate, or, you can find local options using the Disability Advocacy Finder:

<https://disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap/>



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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).

Please click [here](#) to view our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Frequently Asked Questions

Please click [here](#) to view frequently asked questions

What our clients think about Small TALK

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

"You guys set a benchmark for excellent service." - 4/08/2021

"People working there are awesome and I have seen my boy come a long way since we started speech there" - 31/03/2023

"Neuro-affirming practice and flexibility" - 11/05/2023

"Excellent communication and working systems from Shae and the team at Smalltalk. Always approachable and accommodating to our therapy needs" - 22/05/2023

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



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Contacting Us

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EMAIL:	<u>admin@smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au</u>
WEB:	<u>www.smalltalkspeechtherapy.com.au</u>

Please connect with us on Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest to see daily tips to help your family. Click the below images to join our social media family



Smalltalk_speech



SmallTALKspeechtherapyNSW

